

THOMPSON

FRANCIS THOMPSON

In Memoriam

1907-1937



LOVE! I FALL INTO THE CLAWS OF TIME:
BUT LASTS WITHIN A LEAVED RHYME
ALL THAT THE WORLD OF ME ESTEEMS—
MY WITHERED DREAMS, MY WITHERED DREAMS.

An Account of
BOOKS AND MANUSCRIPTS
of
FRANCIS THOMPSON
Edited by
REV. TERENCE L. CONNOLLY
S.J., PH.D.



BOSTON COLLEGE
CHESTNUT HILL, MASSACHUSETTS

Coventry Patmore, in one of the most important letters of this Collection, characterizes the poetry of Francis Thompson as, "song that is also prophecy." And the exhibition described in part in the following pages is an indication of how sure-sighted a prophet Thompson was when he foretold his immortality as a poet—a poet in whose work sanctity and song are inseparably joined. To know how vital is Thompson's influence in the literary resurgence of today, it is enough merely to examine the titles of contemporary publications. To know what a single poem of his has achieved in the present spiritual revival, one has only to read what part "The Hound of Heaven" has played in the numberless conversions among our men and women of letters.

The appeal of Thompson's work is not merely one of aesthetic delight. It has a peculiar power to expand and uplift the soul and draw it nearer to God. That is the chief reason why Boston College is proud to possess a collection of Thompsoniana which, on the word of the greatest living Thompson authority, Mr. Wilfrid Meynell, is second to none in the world, his own excepted. This collection richly deserves the place accorded to it—a special room in the College Library where it is to be a permanent and perpetual exhibit. As if deliberately planned, above the entrance is an alabaster likeness of the Ecce Homo, faintly illuminated, suggesting Thompson's favorite figure—the sun as a symbol of Christ. The room itself is lighted by windows of stained glass picturing scenes from the great poems of ancient Greece and Rome—reminders of Thompson's constantly recurring theme that the best in Pagan literature was precursive of its fulfilment in Christian letters. And so it is pictured here, where the central window of the oriel is dedicated to Dante and his song. The same ideal is thus expressed by Thompson:

"Sings Dante, and sing all noble poets after him, that Love in this world is a pilgrim and a wanderer, journeying to the New Jerusalem: not here is the consummation of his yearnings, in that mere knocking at the gates of union which we christen marriage,

but beyond the pillars of death and the corridors of the grave, in the union of spirit to spirit within the containing Spirit of God.

"The distance between Catullus and the Vita Nuova, between Ovid and the House of Life, can be measured only by Christianity. And the lover of poetry owes a double gratitude to his Creator, Who, not content with giving us salvation on the cross, gave us also, at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, Love. For there Love was consecrated, and declared the child of Jehovah, not of Jove; there virtually was inaugurated the whole successive order of those love-poets who have shown the world that passion, in putting on chastity, put on also tenfold beauty. For purity is the sum of all loveliness, as whiteness is the sum of all colours."

Whoever would appreciate the poetry of one who wrote such prose and such criticism, must not approach it in the cautious spirit of Paganism, old or new. He must approach it in the spirit of one who is willing to heed the burning exhortation of the poet:

And hark

A song thou hast not heard in Northern day;
For Rome too daring, and for Greece too dark.

A more intelligent and more profound appreciation of such poetry must be the result of reading the lines written by the poet's own hand—whether they express the awful truth of the "Marah Amarior," or the playful mood of the "Lamente forre Stephanon." And for the privilege of studying the poet as he reveals himself in these intimate sources we are indebted to the generosity of our benefactors, to the devotion of Mr. Seymour Adelman, to the measureless kindness of Mr. Wilfrid Meynell and to the prayers of the poet's sister, Sister Mary Austin. But as Mr. Meynell has so beautifully and humbly written: "Let none be named the benefactor of him who gave to all more than any could give him. He made all men his debtors, leaving to those who loved him the memory of his personality, and to English poetry an imperishable name."

TERENCE L. CONNOLLY, S.J.

THE STORY OF THE SEYMOUR ADELMAN COLLECTION

IT IS A CURIOUS FACT that I never heard of Francis Thompson until rather late in life. Perhaps that is why I still recall the moment of first acquaintance so vividly. The time was September 1924, a month past my eighteenth birthday. I was a University of Pennsylvania freshman, reading, at the moment, Elliott & Foerster's *English Poetry of the Nineteenth Century*. Now at that time I was extremely suspicious of English poetry, not only of the nineteenth century, but of all other centuries. Throughout grammar school and high school I had regarded as a personal enemy any individual whose poems I was forced to scan, analyze or, most gruesome of all, memorize.

But, glancing through this anthology, my mind lulled and serene because there were no passages to memorize, I discovered something. This book actually contained poems that, once you started them, held you to the last line. There were two, for example, entitled *The Hound of Heaven* and *Before Her Portrait in Youth*. They were as enthralling to me as, I say it in all solemnity, Tilden's forehand drive—the standard of beauty by which (in 1924) I measured everything else. Their author was someone named Francis Thompson. I turned to the back of the book, where a biography of each poet was given, to learn more about this Francis Thompson. The account of his life was interesting but entirely too brief. It did, however, mention a full-length study by one E. Meynell; and this I obtained the next day from the University Library. The story of Thompson's life is as fascinating as his poetry; and pretty soon I was borrowing from the Library every book and magazine article that could tell me more about him.

For a year or two prior to this metamorphosis, while still in high school, I had been a rather casual collector of first editions and autograph letters. This interest was intensified at college by the pleasant discovery—it's impolitic to mention it here, but I will, nevertheless—that English literary history could be learned more thoroughly *via* first editions and autographs than in class-rooms. Let me illustrate the reason. If, for instance, you claim in an

examination paper that Edgar Allan Poe died in 1850, whereas the correct year is 1849, you merely get a zero. But if you are offered a letter written by Poe in 1850, and you purchase it, then you are out a great many dollars—you are now, indeed, away below zero. So you see why the collector is careful to keep his literary data in proper order.

Well, now that I had come upon poetry that appealed so much to me (!), I decided to collect Francis Thompson seriously—and to start off with a few original manuscripts. I was that blissfully ignorant. For it seems that I had chosen, of all the English poets of our time, the very one whose manuscripts and letters were hardest to find. Not only that. I was to learn that his autograph is one of the most elusive in the entire range of modern English literature. Letters of writers so far back as Pope and Dr. Johnson and Byron and Coleridge—to name a few at random—are still plentiful, despite the ravages of time, fire and mildew, because these men corresponded with innumerable people. Thompson's letters, when he wrote at all, went only to a small intimate circle—and many of these he forgot to mail.

And so, in my happy ignorance, I wrote to some thirty or forty American and English dealers, whose names I had gleaned from various journals, asking them to describe their choicer Thompson manuscripts, letters and presentation copies. From each I received a prompt reply, stating that he had no Thompson autograph material whatever. One dealer, indeed, said that he not only possessed no Thompson manuscripts at the moment, but had never beheld one at any time, and he added, somewhat unnecessarily, that he had but faint hopes of ever coming across a specimen in the future.

All this, of course, was dampening news. For a while I did feel that a representative Thompson collection was something beyond my depth. But the natural resiliency of youth buoyed me up; and anyhow, I reflected, if the life-span of man was three score and ten, perhaps, in the fifty-two years left to me, one Thompson letter might possibly come my way. So, greatly uplifted in spirit, I fired a second volley at my list of dealers, asking them, this time, simply to keep a sharp look-out.

I prefer to pass quickly over the next two and a half years. Not so much as a semi-colon in Thompson's handwriting appeared on the horizon. I remember that during this barren interval the news-

papers made a great fuss about an approaching total eclipse of the sun, visible in the latitude of New York and vicinity. The papers described it as an occurrence of the most extreme rarity, but they never succeeded in impressing me. If it was rarity that intrigued them, I had a problem on my hands which reduced such phenomena as total eclipses of the sun to the level of showers in April.

Then, late in 1927, one of the English dealers sent word that he had just located a volume inscribed by Thompson, and was I still interested? Was I! I suppose the passionate affirmative of my cablegram made him shake his head once more over those always incomprehensible Americans. At any rate, nine days later I presented myself at the Philadelphia Custom-House, and went through the drawn-out torture of clearing the book from Customs. But all things come to an end—even custom-house red tape—and at last the aureoled package was given to me. My hands shook so terrifically that I had trouble untying the string. It was a severe case of what a doctor might call 'book-collector's palsy'. I have a special affection for that cornerstone volume—the copy of *Poems* which Thompson presented to his friend and fellow-Meynellite, Arthur Hutchinson.

A year or so later, another English dealer wrote that his firm had just acquired some remarkable autograph material. John Lane, Thompson's publisher, had died; his private library was in process of dispersal; and through this chain of circumstances an opportunity that could never occur again knocked at my door. No need to knock twice: I was at the threshold, keeping the door wide open.

There were some matchless Thompson treasures in the Lane library. I began by choosing two or three items and ended up by cabling for the entire group. My indulgent parents saved me from debtors' prison when the fearsome invoice arrived; indeed, it should be recorded here that the Collection owes its very existence to their unceasing generosity and encouragement.

It was also quite obvious that I was the darling of the gods. How else can I account for the fact that, soon after the Lane windfall, a London bookseller sent me details of a magnificent series of Thompson letters. This time it was Lewis Hind who had died, the editor at whose order Thompson had written some of his finest essays; and now Hind's personal library was up for sale. I spent the day wavering back and forth in my choice of the various letters.

Finally, on the brink of a nervous breakdown through indecision, I saved my tottering reason by cabling for the whole series.

Naturally, the fact that John Lane and Lewis Hind had to die before I could come into possession of all these wonderful things made a deep impression upon my youthful mind. Both Lane and Hind had succumbed to old age. If, thereupon, I hopefully checked up on the ages of people whom I suspected of harboring Thompsoniana, may the Recording Angel put it down to an excess of enthusiasm, rather than any callous disregard for human life. I am sure, too, that in this matter I have the sympathetic understanding of all fellow-collectors.

Other owners of Thompsoniana remained obstinately alive, however; and additions to the Collection now came singly and only after a great deal of searching. Friends in England scoured the bookshops and auctions there; I haunted similar dens of learning in New York and Philadelphia; and every once in a while our combined efforts would track down some long-dreamed-of prize. But you always had to strike swiftly. I remember that on one occasion I was 'phoning to New York for a certain book and at the same time drafting a cable-bid for a letter included in a London auction-sale. The book and the letter concerned each other, and I thought what a handsome couple they would make together—if I could solve that little matter of the Atlantic Ocean between. I did manage to snare both items, and it was a real satisfaction to put them where they belonged—in the same slip-case on my Francis Thompson shelf.

But 'shelf' is hardly the right word. Since the Collection is so largely made up of unique—hence irreplaceable—autograph material, I was always mortally afraid of fire. To forestall such danger, I kept the Collection stored away in bank-vaults, which, though safe enough, severely restricted its powers to delight and inspire Thompson's admirers and research students. It is therefore an even greater satisfaction to know that henceforth the Collection, in a setting as beautiful and appropriate as one could wish for, will be freely available to everyone who loves the poetry of Francis Thompson.

SEYMOUR ADELMAN.

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FOR THE PURCHASE OF
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To THOSE whose names are here inscribed
Boston College owes a debt of gratitude
which cannot be expressed in words.

Students of the present and future
the real beneficiaries of their generosity
are reminded
of the practice of Chaucer's Clerk, who:

BISILY GAN FOR THE SOULES PREYE
OF HEM THAT YAF HYM WHEREWITH TO SCOLEYE.

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*(As this list goes to press, subscriptions are still being received,
an indication that what has already been accomplished is only a
beginning.)*

I-A
USHAW COLLEGE
NOTEBOOK, 1877.

MANUSCRIPT

One of the most important relics of Thompson's youthful days at Ushaw, this little notebook contains some of his earliest poetry and prose.

On the cover is a reproduction of the Parthenon frieze. Its horsemen with their pencilled mustaches and beards reveal Thompson in a moment of school-boy humor. The signature on the cover, Francis Joseph Thompson, is one of the very few in which the poet's middle name appears. On the first page we read the inscription A. M. D. G. an abbreviated form of the Jesuit motto, *Ad majorem Dei gloriam*, which, in this context, is not without an element of prophecy.

Nine poems, a prose phantasy and an essay, fill the thirty-two pages of the book and are written in the careful and beautiful handwriting so characteristic of Thompson. They are described in the order in which they appear.

LAMENTE FORRE STEPHANON. A humorously ironical lament for one of Thompson's over-zealous prefects who had gone to the infirmary. It is printed in the *Ushaw Magazine*, March, 1908, and in Everard Meynell's *Life of Thompson*.

SONG OF THE NEGLECTED POET. The life-struggle of the poet to be true to his art and ideals, though rejected by the world, is here foreshadowed. But the hope of finding in Nature, memories that can

laugh the world to scorn,
was one day to yield to a truer and more austere hope when the poet wrote in his greatest ode:

"Yea faileth now even dream
The dreamer, and the lute the lutanist."

These verses are printed in the *Ushaw Magazine*, March, 1908.

THE STORMING OF CORINTH. The simile of locust-swarms descriptive of Turkish hosts, presages the richer and more mature figures of later work. This prose composition appears in the *Ushaw Magazine*, March, 1908.

LYRIC TO HAVE BEEN INSERTED IN "HELIAS." Some of the lovely, facile lines of this poem, possessed a poignancy deeper than the young poet knew when he wrote:

For my heart craves still for love, sweet life.

This lyric was evidently intended as part of a contemplated play.

FINCHALE. Its prayer to Pan was one day to be answered beyond the wildest dreams of the boy who wrote it:

Aid me, O aid, to body forth in song
A scene as fair as thou in all thy days
Hast gazed upon, or ever yet wilt gaze.

These verses are printed in the *Ushaw Magazine*, March, 1908.

SPRING. Verses that reveal the young poet's sensitiveness to the external beauty of the world.

WAR. Verses on war that form an interesting contrast with later poems such as "Peace."

DIRGE OF DOUGLAS. A school-boy's lament for the Scottish nobleman Sir James Douglas who lived in the fourteenth century and died fighting with the Spanish forces against the Saracens of Granada. These verses are printed in the *Ushaw Magazine*, March, 1908.

A SONG OF HOMILDON. Two indifferent stanzas glorifying the English spirit that defeated the Scots under Douglas in the battle fought on Homildon Hill, September, 1402. These verses are printed in the *Ushaw Magazine*, March, 1908.

ENGLISH COMPOSITION—LOW FIGURES. (Aetatis 14). Written from memory, it is an attempt to set down a composition written five years before—a story of a magician who recalls the past to the central character, De Bonneval. In it we find the consecrated phrases of youthful composition—the "cold, clammy grasp of the sorcerer's hand," and his "eye that seemed to root his victim to the spot."

Close students of Thompson's later work will find in this boyish attempt, certain elements prophetic of what is to come—poetry of reminiscence, such as "An Anthem of Earth," and magic prose such as "Finis Coronat Opus."

THE BATTLE OF VARNA. This incomplete composition describes the background and immediate setting of the famous battle of Turks and Christians. It would seem to have been an assignment in history rather than in English composition, as it is merely a narration of facts and makes no attempt at rhetoric, excepting the opening sentence:

In the progress of nations, as in the progress of torrents, there are checks which, effectual for a while, serve only to augment the fury of the flood when the barrier is at length broken through.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

I-B

ESSAY-THEME

COMMENTS ON *TITUS ANDRONICUS*,
RICHARD III AND SHAKESPEARE GENERALLY

MANUSCRIPT

*A comment and criticism of Shakespeare,
Green, Peele and Marlowe. A page
from one of Thompson's exercise books.*

This Manuscript was originally inserted in the first volume of Thompson's works owned by John Drinkwater. (Cf. XXXI-A.) It was given to Drinkwater by Mr. Wilfrid Meynell who has written a note to that effect in the book in which the Manuscript was inserted, and also in pencil on the Manuscript itself.

(Gift of Mrs. Edward C. Donnelly.)

II
BUONA NOTTE

MANUSCRIPT

This poem on the death of Shelley was first printed in the ATHENAEUM for July 10, 1909. It links the names of Thompson and Shelley even more intimately than the famous SHELLEY ESSAY.

In this original Manuscript, immediately after the title, is written:

"Why do you talk of never enjoying moments like the past? Are you going to join your friend Plato, or do you expect I shall do so soon? *Buona Notte.*"

(Jane Williams' last letter to Shelley, July 6. He was drowned on the 8th.)

There is also in the Manuscript, besides the complete published version, this variant reading for lines 3-6:

And take to thine unlanguageed ear
Grief for their interpreter.

Good night; I have cloven so high
Slumber's heavened serenity,

Later the poet added the following note to the poem: "These verses are supposed to be addressed to Jane by the poet's spirit while his body is tossing on the waters of Spezzia."

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

III

ALL FLESH

MANUSCRIPT

There is no variation between the version of the poem in this manuscript and the published version which first appeared among Thompson's poems in Mr. Wilfrid Meynell's definitive edition.

Here we have the authentic vision of a real seer who looks with euphrasied eyes of faith upon one of the least things of creation, a blade of grass, and sees therein:

God focussed to a point.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

IV
PEACE

MANUSCRIPT

*The actual first draft of the ode occasioned
by the signing of the treaty of peace which
concluded the Boer War, May 31, 1902.*

As Mr. Seymour Adelman has suggested, in reading this Manuscript we sit beside the poet at his work-bench. "Here vividly," writes Mr. Adelman, "we see Thompson's patient sifting of segments until the steadily mounting climax is achieved; his tireless experiments in variant lines, and his unending search for the one right—and no other—word."

The theme of this ode is of particular interest today when there is so much talk about peace, and so little understanding of its real nature according to the Christian ideal. The peace of Christ, Thompson tells us, is not mere cessation from external conflict. It is the peace of men of good will, and good will is the knowing of God's will and the doing of it.

Wishing peace, but not
The means of it,

is as futile in nations as in men, says the poet.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

V
LUX IN TENEBRIS
MANUSCRIPT

This thirty-one page Manuscript of the poem published under the title, FROM THE NIGHT OF FOREBEING, was a gift from Mr. Wilfrid Meynell to Father Connolly, sent from 47 Palace Court, 2 April 1937.

Students of Thompson will regret the change of title—the one in the Manuscript is so complete an expression of his favorite symbol—the sun as a symbol of the Saviour of the World. The differences between the Manuscript and the published version are so numerous that it is impossible to reproduce all of them here. The chief changes are indicated at the top of the mountings of the several pages. Here we shall confine ourselves to printing the three most important passages that appeared in the Manuscript and were later omitted. The first of these we read in the Manuscript between lines 208 and 209 of the published version. It expresses the poet's ever-recurring longing for Spring and sunshine, so indispensable for his inspiration of soul and health of body.

Winter upon my difficult-breathing song;
The seed is scattered long,
The seed is sown, and deep the ground is ploughed,
With sharing visitation torn,
And left forlorn
Of breeding sun, beneath a most chill shroud.
O for the Spring, the never-calendared Spring,
That is so weary-long upon the wing!

Again, in the Manuscript we find the following tragic passage inserted between lines 231 and 232 of the printed version:

Alas! and do I think
Of blue, who only see the cloud?
And to my heavy nocturns vowed,
Ponder of matins and the morn?
And do I dare
To dream of leaves, so sundered from the brink
Of any doubtful-visitant Spring?

Lines 296-361 of the final version do not appear in the Manuscript. Instead of this glorious, though patient song of the vision of faith that looks forward to the resurrection-feast that is to come, we read in the Manuscript:

Yet heed me not; suck on, my youngling, suck!
Lest to my bosom come a worser ache,
If the wise gods me at my rash word take,
And my breast have no more delight of thee.
I will not truck,
For respite without rest, the abysmal rest to be.

Both Manuscript and printed version end with those lines that voice the rare blend of prudence and hope known only to faith that is strong, unfailing and austere:

Firm is the man, and set beyond the cast
Of Fortune's game and the iniquitous hour,
Whose falcon soul sits fast,
And not intends her high sagacious tour
Or ere the quarry sighted; who looks past
To slow much sweet from little instant sour,
And in the first does always see the last.

(Gift of Mr. Wilfrid Meynell.)

VI
GENERAL ROBERTS
STORMING THE PEIWAR KHOTAL
GRAND BATTLE-PAINTING
BY
MISS ELIZABETH THOMPSON

MANUSCRIPT

Written on the reverse side of a lurid illustration of a battle of ants, an advertisement for insecticide, this playful review of the painting of Lady Butler reveals Thompson in a delightfully humorous mood.

Elizabeth Thompson (Lady Butler), Alice Meynell's sister, was a noted painter of military subjects. She must have been highly amused by the poet's criticism of "The Black Ants Invaded by the Red Ants," as if it were her latest battle-scene. It portrays an army of black ants being routed by a horde of red ants as they plant the insecticide banner on the summit of an ant-hill fort. Here is what Thompson wrote:

"General Roberts is seen waving his sword with one foot planted on the summit of the Fort. The stubborn resistance which the Afghans are said to have made is realistically represented by two men firing their rifles from the embrasures of the fort in the very faces of the advancing British. The attitudes and colouring are lifelike and excellent; the chiaro-oscuro of the background is especially noticeable. This picture is undoubtedly a work of great power, and shows a considerable advance on the former paintings of this celebrated artist."

Extract from the "Standard."

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

VII

COVENTRY PATMORE'S
CHARACTERIZATION OF
EMERSON

MANUSCRIPT

*The final page of excerpts from
Patmore's essay on Emerson.*

The essay from which these excerpts are taken appears in Patmore's volume, *Principle in Art*. Its characterization of the Sage of Concord, here copied by Thompson, reveals the parts that particularly interested him. It reads:

His American admirers sometimes spoke of him as an "angel." At any rate, he was a sort of sylph. He noted of his compatriots generally that "they have no passions, only appetites." He seems to have had neither passion nor appetite; and there was an utter absence of "nonsense" about him which made it almost impossible to be intimate with him. . . . His closest friend, and even his wife, whom he loved in his own serene way, seem to have chafed under the impossibility of getting within the adamantine sphere of self-consciousness which surrounded him. He not only could not forget himself, but he could not forget his grammar; and when he talked, he seemed rather to be "composing" his thoughts than thinking them. . . . Emerson, though a good man—that is, one who lived up to his lights—had little or no conscience. He admired good, but did not love it; he denounced evil, but did not hate it. . . . He never even melted the icy barrier which separated his soul from others; and men and women were nothing to him, because he never got near enough to understand them.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

VIII
MARAH AMARIOR

MANUSCRIPT

*Never having been published in book form,
this deeply poignant poem is little known.*

There is in this Manuscript a notable contrast between the poet's firm, steady handwriting and the awfulness of what he has written. Other poets have equalled Thompson in sounding the depths of human suffering but few have described so well that awful humiliation of the proud heart,

When first it finds it can forget.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

IX

LOVE'S ALMSMAN COMPLAINETH
OF HIS FARE

MANUSCRIPT

When published, the title of this poem was shortened to

LOVE'S ALMSMAN PLAINETH
HIS FARE

This manuscript is a notable example of the poet's dignified and careful handwriting.

This first poem of the sequence, *Ultima*, poignantly autobiographical, is the cry of a love-famished soul who never faltered in "that slaying of domesticities which went to his own making of 'a poet out of a man.' " There are slight verbal variations in the last line and in line thirty as they appear in the Manuscript and in the published version. Line fifteen in the Manuscript reads:

Gnaw'st on thyself in passionate duresse.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

X
A SIGNED REVIEW OF
"THE POEMS OF ERNEST DOWSON"

MANUSCRIPT

Eight pages of Thompson's book-review of the POEMS OF ERNEST DOWSON, WITH A MEMOIR BY ARTHUR SYMONS. FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS BY AUBREY BEARDSLEY AND PORTRAIT BY WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN (1905, London, John Lane). Written in pencil, no corrections are made in the Manuscript.

One of the most important of Thompson's critical writings, this Manuscript is primarily an estimate of Dowson as a poet. But it is also a general criticism of the whole Decadence as a literary movement, and makes mention of Beardsley, Rothenstein, Verlaine, Savage, Baudelaire, Hugo, Swinburne, Gautier and Rossetti. It reads in part:

This tastefully produced volume contains the slight work of a frail and (in an artistic sense) faint minor poet. . . .

He has more affinity with the Quartier Latin than with Grub Street, with Verlaine than with Keats or even Savage, that eighteenth century decadent. The French influence was an evil thing in his career; though be it said that with him, at least, it was no affectation, but the natural result of an early foreign up-bringing. Partly through native trend and affinities, partly (one fears) through the influence of a morbid Parisian tradition on an impressionable and imitative nature, he transplanted to the brutal atmosphere of the East End the worst follies associated with the literary cafés of Montmartre; from the *haschisch* of Baudelaire to the alcoholism of Verlaine. So he prematurely broke to pieces a fragile body and more fragile genius.

. . . . The dainty sense of form, the diction delicately cut and graven, rather than (like Verlaine's and our own supreme lyrists') condensing from the emotion inevitably and freshly as dew; these features suggest Gautier or Gallic lyricism in general, not the spontaneous fluidity which Verlaine shares with so utterly different a lyrist as Hugo. It is the contrast between Greek artistry, reliant on the sculpturesque or architectural elements of form and structure; and Gothic or Celtic poetry, rooted in a peculiar spiritual intimacy, which we Goths dis-

tinctively recognize as poetry, and of which there are but the rarest examples in the classic poets (by "classic" meaning Greek and Latin). . . .

. . . . So many modern poets have professed a Parisian morbidity at second hand that the thing is suspect. But here it was the too sincere outcome of a life influenced by what to him was a compatriot-atmosphere. Derivative he was in his morbidity; but as a Parisian poet might be. Nevertheless, this derivativeness condemns him, as it would a French writer, to the minor ranks. The major poet moulds more than he is moulded by his environment. And it may be doubted whether the most accomplished morbidity can survive the supreme test of time. In the long run sanity endures; the finest art goes under if it be perverse and perverted art, though for a while it may create a life under the ribs of death.

Yet, with this great doubt, Ernest Dowson's work makes a present and delicate appeal to a generation itself sick of many ills. . . . Sensitiveness, indeed, is the precise word one would choose to indicate its leading quality. . . . It is altogether poetry of feeling, one might well-nigh say of a single feeling, or cast of feeling. Regret—the pathos of lost virtue, lost or at least ineffectual love, lost opportunities, lost virginalness in an aesthetic no less than ethical sense—informs these lyrics in monotone. An ineffectual regret, with not even a desire to regain what is lost, or a hope to attain effectual love. Inevitably, then, somewhat ineffectual (which is another matter from ineffective) poetry; for it is the poetry of disillusion. Read in bulk, the constant wail of regret and unsatisfied satiety becomes weak and weariful. But in single lyrics, when he touches his best, it has a frail and mournful charm.

This comes partly of a temperamental sweetness, which Mr. Symons noted also in his converse. . . . His best, Mr. Symons thinks, is the poem with the refrain, "I have been faithful to thee, Cynara, in my fashion." Remembered love makes hollow present infidelities—that is the theme of it. Unwholesome, wistfully cynical, like the bulk of these lyrics, it is perfect in workmanship and a dainty symmetry contrasting with its sincere bitterness of regret. Mr. Symons, we think, is right. But in the superlatives of his praise we cannot join. Its grace, like that of all Dowson's poetry, is too hectic for supreme praise: nor has it the strange and penetrating power that makes Poe's "To Annie" haunting despite its opium-delirium. "This also is vanity" Dowson sings in many poems of a frail grace, sweetness, and slender completion of form. But the central defect of power keeps him still a lesser poet—a poet of the bitten apple, without the core of fire which made Rossetti, for instance, far more than a lesser poet. And then, too, unlike Rossetti, he has no brain, but just pure feminine sensibility.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XI

A SIGNED REVIEW OF
"THE CHURCH AND
KINDNESS TO ANIMALS"

MANUSCRIPT

A twelve-page review of THE CHURCH AND KINDNESS TO ANIMALS (1906, London, Burns and Oates)—an anonymous publication with the following chapters: I Condemnation of Bull-Fighting. II Animals in the Lives and Legends of Saints. III A Cloud of Modern Witnesses. Written in pencil there are many corrections in an unidentified hand.

Here we find Thompson a master of gentle irony and wisdom in such passages as the following which might well be pondered by anti-vivisectionists and members of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, as well as those unalterably opposed to these movements.

The official Church, so far as it can be said to have spoken on the vexed theme of man's relation to lower creatures, has cautiously limited itself to pointing out the essential theological teaching affecting the question. It has need for caution. The advocates of animals include many minds with varying views and motives. One influential section obviously seeks to equalize man and the animals in regard to the possession—or lack—of soul; often leaning towards the Hindu view. To the moderate mind it seems clear that the taking of animal life is a necessity. The opposite view, it appears to us, logically involves the infamy of all germicides, and the abominableness of murdering innocent microbes only seeking for a living. The greatest happiness of the greatest number obliges man to give place to the microbe; who, on any true principle of universal suffrage, would outvote him every time. But if he may inflict death for his own advantage, why not for his own advantage the lesser evil of pain? Obviously, it should seem, in these matters man is reduced to a practical compromise, as wise and forebearing as his wisdom may contrive. None the less, if he take up a lordship of life and death, of pain and happiness, over these creatures committed to his rule, surely he therewith assumes duties towards the ruled, even as he looks to God for a merciful care of his life and death. . . .

. . . . Nothing is perhaps more noteworthy than the unanimous dislike of these Saints for sport-killing as an amusement, which we English carry almost into a vice. To hunt for pastime when it is no longer needful to hunt for a living, seems to some of us a barbarism well meriting their dislike. . . . Beyond the line of sport lie such "pastimes" as baiting of animals: and here the Church herself has spoken through her Head. The Bull of St. Pius V, is given entire—a Bull which tossed bull-fights "most emphatic," and declared all who attended them worthy of the censures of the Church. It was as little heeded as papal remonstrances against the Spanish Inquisition. But how many know of its issue?

The poet's conclusion is this:

The man, in truth, who excuses apathy towards the suffering of the brutes on the ground that there is so much human misery needing relief, is probably a man who does not work himself to death in the cause of humanity.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XII
PREFACE TO
SISTER SONGS

MANUSCRIPT

Written from his monastic retreat at Ivy Cottage, Pantasaph, this Manuscript of the famous Preface gives the date of the writing of SISTER SONGS and explains the similarity between line fifteen of the PROEM and a figure that had already been used by Coventry Patmore.

Line 15 of the *Proem* reads:

For Spring leaps in the womb of the year.

This, Thompson tells us in the Preface:

was an unconscious plagiarism from the beautiful image in Mr. Patmore's *St. Valentine's Day*:—

"O baby Spring,
That flutter'st sudden 'neath the breast of Earth,
A month before the birth!"

Never was there a more gracious acknowledgment of an unintended plagiarism than Thompson's in this Manuscript:

Finding I could not disengage it without injury to the passage in which it is embedded, I have preferred to leave it, with this acknowledgment to a poet rich enough to lend to the poor.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XIII
PROOF-SHEETS
OF
SISTER SONGS

*The original title, Amphicypellon Wrought and up-brimmed for Two Sisters, is here changed to the title used in the copies privately printed by Mr. Wilfrid Meynell— Songs Wing-to-Wing: An Offering to Two Sisters. It was not until the poem was published that the simpler title was adopted: Sister Songs: An Offering to Two Sisters. The two sisters were Madeline (*Sylvia*) and Monica, children of Wilfrid and Alice Meynell.*

These galley-proofs contain many additions and deletions in Thompson's handwriting. On the obverse side of the galley for Part I, 11. 241-277, in pencil, in Thompson's handwriting, is the first draft of Part I, 11. 360-366. The deeply poignant lines of the published version (Part I, 11. 279-281), appear for the first time written by the poet in the margin of these proofs, as a substitution for the following lines:

The abashless stare from each cold, smiling star,
Malignant and impitiable of eye.

Again, in the margin, the poet has written this first draft of Part II, 11. 149-152:

The sacramental-conscious trees
Which ever be
Shaken celestially,
Confederate with enamoured wings, know of my love for thee.

These lines are substituted for the following line, deleted in the galley:

What could I seemlier love than childhood, child, and thee?

Line 745 in Part II is the poet's substitution for the following lines of the proof-sheets:

Its stalactites of flame, its icicles of fire.
Oh, that this verse were strong as its desire!
I had built a thing might scorn at fortune's spurns
Until doom overturns
The broken stellèd urns.

Following line 38 of the Inscription as it appears in the published version, the following passage, deleted by the poet, appeared in the proof-sheets:

As if his sprite had blossomed in the wild,
Diversely-like his soul whence fell its seed,
And little like to any kindred weed:
A lovely bell in a far lawny plot
Breathes and doth little wot
Of its unguessed-at child.
Athwart the intervening dreariment
Some fire-suffusèd bee the germins brought,
From that bell's ripened bosom winging sprent
Gold-frosty with a clinging rime of thought.

The most interesting as well as the longest deleted passage in the proof-sheets is the following. In a light, fanciful strain it sings the poet's playful envy of a toy Burmese idol that had won the love of little Madeline Meynell to whom Part I of *Sister Songs* was written.

But out, alack, unhappy me!
For I have a rival,
A rival from the ancestral East.
Never such a rival
Heard I that a human
Heart for its trial
Was sent by the spawning East
Out of her crew!
Never did such a rival
Teach a lover sighing,
Never such a suitor
Man yet knew!
A wooden Burmese idol,
In passing favour held;

To whom the dusky knees have kneeled,
(Abominable rival!—
I am glad he has lost his bell!)
A wry-mouthed idol,
A lurdane Burmese idol,
Most grisly and gruesome,

Most hideous of hue.
Ah, had the gods but made me,
But made me, but made me
A wooden Burmese idol,
Most hideous and rueful,
Most dreadful to view!
Then small lips would sue to me,
And small hands coy me,
And small mouths call me "Beautiful":—
Sweet little toyers!
Sweet wooers to woo!

*O lurdane Burmese idol! no voice can you upraise
To Sylvia, O Sylvia, herfeat, sweet ways!*
Within your veins no holiday
Pricks you on, this vernal day,
To syllable to Sylvia:
Though all the birds on branches lave their mouths with May,
You will not bear this burthen,
For singing to Sylvia!

*"I bid all my children companion voices raise
To Sylvia, their Sylvia, her sweet,feat ways;
Their lovesome labours lay away,
And trick them out in holiday,
For syllabling to Sylvia;*
*While all my birds on branches lave their mouths with May,
And burthens bring of welcome,
For singing to Sylvia."*

(These lines, printed in the proof-sheets between 11. 341-342, of Part I, of the published version, are followed by 11. 342-366

of the published version. Then these deleted lines follow immediately in the proof-sheets:

"But for that Iurdane idol,
To Burmah I doom him,
Back to his land of chrysoberyl and jade,
Topaz and amber;
Where swelter in Magoung
The clusters swart, or on the mountained marble
Moil, or in aurate waters;
Burman, Panthay, and Shan.
There may him round environ
Brown faces glooming,
With all their snaky silken swathe

Of hues in zig-zag banded:
That in Pegu
Worship their monstrous god, enthronised, carven,
Cowled Naga-Rajah;
Or where Tartarian battle strook Pagán."

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XIV
MARGINAL ANNOTATIONS
IN
THOMPSON'S HANDWRITING

These pages (235-240) are from *Merry England*, vol. XX—January, 1893. Thompson's annotations on the notes by the English Jesuit, Father Clarke, reveal his interest in the hierarchy of the angelic order, so frequently manifest in his poetry. They also reflect a fineness of exegetical acumen not popularly expected in a poet. Commenting upon the common belief in seven spirits, Thompson writes:

Kepler held a like view; and in the day of Huxley I hold with Kepler—and Ezekiel. The tradition of seven spirits is common to all races, as Fr. Clarke shows. Then why suggest the Turanians as its originators? The presumption is naturally that it was shared by all the children of Noah. But may I suggest that the seven are not *preeminent*? They stand before the throne; and seem clearly to be the chief of the *executive* and *manifesting* spirits. Three are declared to be archangels—therefore on the second round only of the hierarchic ladder.

(Gift of Mr. Wilfrid Meynell.)

XV
AUTOGRAPH LETTER
SIGNED
TO COVENTRY PATMORE

These eight pages contain Thompson's high praise of Patmore's work, especially of his last volume, The Rod, the Root and the Flower. Of equal importance are the poet's remarks concerning the "Orient Ode," just completed.

The criticism of Patmore's book of aphorisms reads, in part:

It is the profoundest prose of yours I have yet read. It is only by comparing you with yourself that I can mark my sense of it; for no other modern writer furnishes any standard of measurement. Where all is deep, the *Aurea Dicta* appears to me the deepest. It is pure wisdom; the other sections being, in differing proportions, mingled with the lesser profundity—or rather the profundity in a lesser kind—of knowledge. I have read no such collection of aphorisms. There is enough to build the reputation of sages seven times seven. I marked the sayings which took me most; then found I had marked three quarters of them, and went back and re-selected amongst my selections; and finally wondered why I should mark any, when each, in turn, seemed the most worthy of marking. Do you notice, by the way, that in one of them you have slipped into a very beautiful heroic line?—

"Meeting unequal claims with equal duty."

If that had been cited to me, I should have said: "Shakespeare, of course, but I do not remember it. Where does it come?"

Then, speaking of the "Orient Ode," which he had just completed, Thompson gives us the source of his inspiration.

As a matter of fact it was written soon after Easter, and was suggested by passages in the liturgies of Holy Saturday, some of which—at rather appalling length—I have quoted at the head of its two parts. That was done for the sake of those who might cavil at its doctrines. Indeed—perhaps with superfluous caution—I intended

much of it to be sealed; but your book has mainly broken the seals I had put upon it. There is quite enough in it yours, without the additional presumption that I had hastened to make immediate use of your last book.

The letter ends with Thompson's too humble opinion of *Sister Songs*:

My own ill-destined volume has appeared, and even Lane has evidently realized beforehand that it ought not to have appeared. I have seen a review in the *Chronicle*—by Le Gallienne, I presume. By no means enthusiastic, and mainly just in its non-enthusiasm. I am apathetic about the book, as a bad business which I cannot mend, and wash my hands of.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XVI

LETTER OF CONDOLENCE
TO MRS. PATMORE

This incomparable letter is one of the most perfect expressions of sympathy in the English language. The depth of its indefinable emotion and the unaffected simplicity of its language mark it as the spontaneous utterance of a great genius and a rare soul.

Creccas Cottage
Pantasaph
Holy Well
N. Wales.
Monday Nov. 30/96

Dear Mrs. Patmore,

I am shocked and overcome to hear of your—and my—bereavement. There has passed away the greatest genius of the century, and from me a friend whose like I shall not see again; one so close to my own soul that the distance of years between us was hardly felt, nor could the distance of miles separate us. I had a letter from him but last Monday, and was hoping that I might shortly see him again. Now my hope is turned suddenly into mourning. The irrevocableness of such a grief is mocked by many words; these few words least wrong it. My friend is dead, and I had but one such friend.

Yours, in all sympathy of sorrow,
Francis Thompson.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XVII
AUTOGRAPH POSTCARD
FROM
THOMPSON TO MRS. MEYNELL

Addressed to 47 Palace Court, this card bears the postmark of July 28, 1896, near the end of the poet's stay at Pantasaph.

One of the many such cards which Thompson, because of his absent-mindedness and ill health, had been instructed to send the Meynells who were always filled with foreboding whenever he travelled alone.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XVIII
AUTOGRAPH LETTER
SIGNED
TO EVERARD MEYNELL

A familiar letter to the poet's biographer.

Chiefly in praise of the showing made by three Lancashire cricketers in the Australian test, this letter expresses Thompson's keen interest in England's national game. At one time he thought of writing a volume on the history of cricket.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XIX

AUTOGRAPH LETTERS

SIGNED

TO JOHN LANE

[A]

From his monastic retreat at Pantasaph, Wales, Thompson sent this nine-page letter to his publisher, May, 1895.

The poet expresses his fear that he has been "a little peppery," and his fear is well founded. The pepperiness, however, was not on Lane's account; but because of an alleged failure of Mr. Wilfrid Meynell to send the poet a copy of *Sister Songs*,

privately printed at Westminster Press, in order that they might be used for working from, to save the Ms. from possible destruction.

In a letter to Mr. Seymour Adelman, Mr. Meynell gives the following reason for printing this edition: "Despite Le Gallienne's, and our, estimate of the poet, Lane did not care to make this second venture. So I had the poem printed, striking off a handful of copies before passing the type over to Lane, and so saving him some of his dreaded expense."

In the course of this letter Thompson makes some rather bitter statements about Mr. Meynell — statements which Mr. Meynell, with his unfailing charity, has characterized as reflecting a few moments of pique during a friendship of twenty years. Students of Thompson will be interested to read how strongly he insisted upon a revision of the privately printed version of his poem, before it was published.

All that I have at present is some advance pages of the *First Part*. But the *Second Part* also needs alterations; slight, and quickly made, but made they *must* be—or I will not let the poem go to the press. So, I repeat, I must have a copy at once of the complete poem.

[29]

Apropos of the first sentence in this passage and of Mr. Meynell's apparent carelessness of which the poet complains, there is in this collection an undated letter from Mr. Meynell to Lane which reads: "I suppose you had some proofs from F. T. He has the others in his bag, in which I placed them the morning he left. . . . I have played up to his farce by sending a fresh set to-day."

[B]

Another letter from Pantasaph written by Thompson to his publisher immediately after receiving the advance copy of SISTER SONGS, July 1895.

Speaking of his contract with his publisher Thompson refers to a previous contract and in comparing the two, writes:

The other agreement allowed me six *gratis* copies; this allows me none beyond the one you have already sent me. Now, I have no personal occasion for so many as 6; but I should have liked two more copies, or at any rate one more, which I desire to send to Mr. Patmore with a personal inscription in my own writing.

From this we learn how precious is Thompson's presentation copy of *Sister Songs*, one of the volumes in the Adelman Collection.

[C]

A typewritten statement mentioning Wilfrid Meynell and Thompson; with particular reference to a letter which Thompson had written concerning Lane.

(All of these items are from the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XX
AUTOGRAPH LETTER
SIGNED
TO ARTHUR DOUBLEDAY

An important letter planning a fourth volume of poems which never appeared. It was written from 16 Elgin Avenue W. Wednesday, Jan. 12/98.

When Archibald Constable and Co. published Thompson's *New Poems*, one of the partners of the firm was Mr. Arthur Doubleday—"a very charming man," according to Mr. Wilfrid Meynell, "with that personal appreciation of F. T.'s poetry which Lane lacked,—taking in its place Le Gallienne's commendation." Thompson's aversion to Lane, so strongly expressed in this letter, "took the form of accusations, too lightly made," according to Mr. Meynell, and resulted in Thompson's insistence upon another publisher for his last volume.

Besides its violent attack upon Lane there are in this letter some very unjust allusions to Mr. Meynell. But it was evidently written in a fit of temper. That may be why Mr. Meynell did not destroy the letter when Mr. Doubleday gave it to him. Instead, he sent it to Lane shortly before his death, "wishing him to decide for himself as to its preservation."

Apropos of his plans for another volume of poems, Thompson wrote:

I have material for a thin volume whenever, and if ever, you desire to deal again in my wares. It includes the *Pastoral*, and (hypothetically) the *Tom o' Bedlam*. Some revision would first be necessary. . . . Revision is harder than first composition. It demands a ghost, a resurrection of the original inspiration; and the ghost is too often slow to rise to one's summons.

There is in this letter the following interesting allusion to the poem *Tom o' Bedlam*, mentioned above. For the printed version

of this poem as it appeared in *The Dome* we are indebted to Mr. Shane Leslie. Concerning the manuscript Thompson wrote:

I have not yet received the Tom o' Bedlam, but it is still early days. It will be hapless fortune if you have lost your copy, for I am quite without one, and unable to remember the poem, which I greatly valued, in common with all my friends. But if so—Kismet.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XXI

TWO AUTOGRAPH LETTERS

SIGNED

TO WILFRID WHITTEN

*Letters to the Assistant Editor of the
ACADEMY, when C. Lewis Hind was Editor.*

[A]

Eight pages written in pencil without date or address, a tragic revelation of the poet's complete mental and physical exhaustion. Had the writer been less explicit in describing his desperate state, it would have been evident from his unsteady handwriting and the disordered way in which he strives to offer an apology and explanation for borrowing ten shillings at the office of the *Academy*. It reads, in part:

Finding you not likely to be in, I asked for an advance of 10/; was told Hind had said such things were in future to be referred to him. It is most reasonable, since I can imagine it may cause difficulty in the accounts: moreover it is the providence of the Editor to decide what moneys shall be allowed. It was an irregular privilege which I willingly submit to have abolished, and will henceforth submit all such requests to Hind personally. But Andrews offered to lend me the sum on his own responsibility and let me settle the matter with Hind. Unluckily I accepted the offer, and I am now very sorry. It may make trouble for him, and was not a necessity, but only a convenience, for me; since my sole reason for calling in was to see you, as I have mentioned. And perhaps Hind's reason for prohibiting it was that he had resolved not to use the Patmore middle, being so late. The 10/ is nevertheless covered by other work I have in hand. But it now strikes me perhaps Hind does not wish me to do that other work, either. I ought to have thought he might have serious reason for the step, not merely the wish to keep the reins in his own hands, as I hastily supposed. Altogether I am most vexed I took Andrews' good-natured offer. I only hope the blame will be duly laid on me, not on him. But I was in no state for clear reflection, being so giddy from weakness that I tottered in your doorway.

[33]

[B]

Sent from 16 Elgin Avenue, this is merely a request that he inform Hind that the poet's article on Browning had gone in. It appeared in the *Academy*, May 8, 1897. The postscript telling of a sick headache is written in a singularly unsteady hand.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XXII
A SERIES OF
SEVEN AUTOGRAPH LETTERS
SIGNED
TO C. LEWIS HIND

These letters are to the editor of the ACADEMY, to which Thompson contributed some of his best criticism. They reveal the physical pain, the mental anguish and the incurable dilatoriness of the poet's last years. Their deep pathos, however, is not unrelieved by a vein of rich humor. Many of these letters are quoted by Everard Meynell in his LIFE OF THOMPSON.

[A]

This letter, sent from 28 Elgin Avenue W, was delayed because Thompson had no stamp. In it he comments with tragic humor upon his doctor's warning that his rheumatic fever is liable to react upon his heart:

It is a question whether a man of forty, and a professional hermit, retains such an organ as a heart.

[B]

Writing from 39 Goldney Road, Harrow Road, the poet endeavors to explain what he meant by saying that Hind was "a man of the world with a taste for letters."

It would be nearer my meaning if I had called you a man of action with a love for letters—and art. Wilfrid Blunt, Wyndham, etc., are examples of the class. I might even say Henley. It is true that you, no more than Henley, have ever been a man of action like Blunt or Wyndham. Some more inclusive term is needed. The essential thing is, that *life* occupies the principal place in your regard—not life as it should be lived, the ideal of life in other words—but actual everyday life, "life as she *is* lived." This is foremost, letters or art second. Raleigh and a host of the great Elizabethans belonged to the same

[35]

school. "Man of action first" is perhaps the nearest I can get to it. "Man of the world" is bungling, because it bears so many significations. Anyway, *now*, I hope, you have some idea of my meaning. It was an antithesis between the pure thinker and recluse, on one hand; the man interested in action for its own sake, yet with a foothold in letters, on the other.

[C]

A letter accompanying the article on Wordsworth and promising one on Fiona Macleod, sent from 16 Elgin Avenue W. It contains the poet's refusal to attempt articles on Shelley, Browning and Tennyson. This, despite his need of funds.

Considering the importance—the great importance—of the writers I am asked to treat, I do not feel that I could do justice either to my subject or my own reputation within the limit (of 1,000 words) proposed. In the case of such minor men as Landor, or even possibly Macaulay, I should not object to the limitation—biographical details being omitted. But I simply cannot pledge my name to a disposal of Tennyson or Browning in about two columns. It would be a mere clumsy spoiling of material which I might to greater advantage use elsewhere. I could only undertake it on the terms that the length of the article should be determined by the organic exigencies of my treatment alone. Of course I have never dreamed of anything beyond five columns as what you could reasonably allow me for important articles.

Thompson's demands were subsequently met, and articles of four and a half columns on Tennyson and Browning appeared in the *Academy* on April 17 and May 8, 1897. Strangely enough, the article on Shelley printed May 22, is shorter—two and a half columns.

[D]

In this highly amusing though pathetic letter bearing neither address nor date, Thompson offers to pay for a book sent him to review, which he had inadvertently sold.

Of course, under such circumstances I hold myself responsible for replacing it as soon as I can. Or if you cannot wait, I would suggest you get the book, and dock it out of my extra money. For instance, this week ten shillings will fall due to me, over and above what is

necessary for lodgings and personal expense (two 2½ cols. makes 10s. over the two pounds for my lodgings); if you dock that, in the usual course probably a week or two will yield another 10s. extra. I propose this as the only way which occurs to me.

The only alternative is for me to pick oakum (if they do that in debtor's gaols). And I have not the talents for oakum-picking. Though I enjoyed the distinguished tuition of a burglar, who had gone through many trials—and houses—in the pursuit of this little-known art, I showed such mediocre capacity that the Master did not encourage me to persevere. Besides, seeing how over-crowded the profession is, it would be a pity for me to take the oakum out of another man's fingers.

[E]

The following letter sent from 28 Elgin Avenue, gives an idea of the incredible absent-mindedness of the poet and his pathetic attempts to cope with it.

I muddled up the time altogether today. How, I do not now understand. I started off soon after 2. Thinking I had time for a letter to the *Academy* which it had been in my mind to write, I delayed my journey to write it. When I was drawing to a conclusion, I heard the clock strike 3 (as it seemed to me). I thought I should soon be finished, so went on to the end. A few minutes later, as it appeared, the clock struck again, and I counted 4. Alarmed, I rushed off—vexed that I should get in by half-past 4, instead of half-past 3, as I intended—and finished the thing in the train. I got to the *Academy*, and was struck all of a heap. There was nobody there, and it was ten past six!

[F]

These four pages from 28 Elgin Avenue give the poet's views on the ethics of book-reviewing. The letter was prompted by a letter to the editor of the *Academy* from Miss Frances Power Cobbe, objecting to Thompson's review of a posthumous volume of the poems of Louisa Shore, with a Memoir by her sister. The review printed in the *Academy*, November 28, 1896, criticizes the Memoir as well as the poems. Thompson met Miss Power Cobbe's objections with a rare blend of gentleness and firmness.

I regret that my review should strike her in the light in which it apparently does—as, it would seem, a personal attack. I should be

sorry to be guilty of anything of the kind, as I most certainly was without intention of the kind. But I cannot see that my review exceeded the limits of impartial criticism. . . . When a book comes before a reviewer for criticism he cannot be expected to know or take account of personal matters—of anything outside the book itself. Many things might plead that he should be very gentle with the author, but he has no knowledge of them. The book is an impersonal thing to him; and the author who publishes a book becomes impersonal, and must expect to be treated as a mere name at the head of so many printed pages. This may be unpleasant, but it is the inevitable consequence of publication. The reviewer has only the book before him. He can only judge it impartially on its internal merits, praising in accordance with its power, blaming in proportion to its failure. If the failure be considerable, this may be a very painful process to the author; but the reviewer has no choice, and the author courted this ordeal, implicitly submitted himself to it, by venturing authorship. The critic can but register his impressions, coldly impartial by his very function. Did he abstain from the blame he thought just because (for example) of the writer's sex, it would be equivalent to abdicating criticism where women are concerned, extending the privileges of the drawing-room to the reviewing-column. But women of literary power would be the first to protest against the insincerity of "letting them off" because of their sex. I could point to some recent reviews of acknowledged female writers, to show that criticism at least as searching as mine is now habitually incurred and faced by women. It is on the reviewer's conscience to avoid personal attack, to criticise the book and the book only, to touch nothing of the writer but his literary quality. And this law, I think and hope, I have not exceeded. That an adverse review should give pain is an unhappy necessity. But it *is* a necessity, from which the reviewer cannot draw back—though he would gladly shirk the ungracious and ungrateful task. But the truth, as he sees it, has to be said,—even about a woman's book. And to censure the book is not to censure the writer. It seems to me (with all respect) that Miss Power Cobbe (for whom I cannot fail to share the honour which her career has earned) loses sight somewhat of this point.

If, in conclusion, I have in any way gone beyond the limit of purely impersonal criticism, it is to me a thing as regrettable as unintentional. But I cannot yet perceive that I have done so.

[G]

These two letters, bearing neither address nor date, are merely repetitions of the poet's attempt to explain his tardiness because of illness and sleeplessness.

(All of these letters are from the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XXIII
AUTOGRAPH LETTERS
SIGNED
FROM MR. WILFRID MEYNELL

[A]

To John Lane. London, September 7, 1897. A letter expressing the unfailing solicitude of Mr. Meynell for the poet's welfare. It reads, in part:

The Poet has been here nearly every evening since last Monday, hoping to find something for him from you. Cannot you let your clerk send him the accounts made up for each six months, instead of having 18 months or so lumped together as in those already supplied? . . .

It is very hard on the Poet to keep him waiting so long, or you may be sure I would not bother you.

[B]

To John Lane. London, May, 1895. Chiefly it concerns supplying Thompson with proof-sheets for *Songs Wing-to-Wing*.

[C]

To F. H. Day, the American publisher of Thompson, Mrs. Meynell and Father Tabb. London, February 9, 1895. An eight-page letter in which Mr. Meynell expresses his own and Thompson's admiration for Father Tabb's poetry.

As for Fr. Tabb, I know a great number of his Poems by heart: and I admire him more than I can easily say. All in this house and in our circle, to whom we have shown or read them, (Le Gallienne, William Watson, Winifred Lucas and others) share my admiration. . . . Francis Thompson has been staying with us for a couple of months, and left us yesterday on his return to the monastery in Wales. I read Fr. Tabb—nearly all of it—to him several times over. Of course he thought it wonderfully fine. Indeed all agree that no such *workmanship* has come out of America yet. As for the *sentiment*, we Catholics are particularly grateful for it: the literary slush in which religion has hitherto been offered to us, having made us all sick to death.

There is an amusing reference to Everard Meynell who eighteen years later was to write the biography of Thompson:

Everard wrote to you, but I was obliged to suppress a letter so badly spelt. . . . He is longing to have you again for a sitter. He is improving very fast; and I hope he will do something good before he has done.

[D]

To Mr. White. An informal note inviting him to a private view of Lady Butler's paintings, at her studio.

[E]

To Mr. White. Tunbridge Wells, May 24, 1881. An expression of his wife's gratitude for Mr. White's condolences on the death of her father. There is also an interesting allusion to Mrs. Meynell's brother-in-law, Colonel Butler:

He is dining tonight with the Princess Louise to tell her about *The Wild Northland* which she wants to visit.

When this letter was written the Meynells were unaware that in Owens College, Manchester, there was a very unsuccessful medical student whom they were one day to rescue from the streets of London to be one of the greatest poets of his day.

(All of these letters are from the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XXIV
AUTOGRAPH LETTERS
SIGNED
FROM ALICE MEYNELL

[A]

To John Lane. Palace Court, August 3, (1894). An invitation to John Lane to dine at Meynell's with Coventry Patmore, Aubrey de Vere and William Ernest Henley. An amusing postscript reads:

I am trying to make Francis Thompson come, but he is afraid of so many poets.

[B]

To F. Holland Day, American publisher of Mrs. Meynell's and Thompson's books. 47 Palace Court, London, January 29, (1895). In praise of Father Tabb's poetry and speaking of Thompson it reads:

I am so great an admirer of Father Tabb's exquisite talent that it would be a pleasure to make any verse of his known, but it is not easy to place good verse here, unfortunately. . . . Mr. Francis Thompson is publishing his new book with Messrs. Constable. He was displeased with a certain class of books published at the Bodley Head, and refused to go on with his first publisher. Seeing, however, that Mr. Lane had reformed the Yellow Book, I have continued with him.

[C]

To John Lane. (London, May, 1895). An interesting letter from which we learn the painstaking collaboration of Thompson and his friends in editing his work. It reads:

I have just received these pages criticized by Coventry Patmore, and corrected a second time by F. T. Please let nothing go to press with-

[41]

out Mr. Patmore's seeing it. You could send direct to him, or else to me. If pages have been passed by F. T. since then, please let me have them.

[D]

To Mr. Dunn. Palace Court, London W., June 11, (1904). A brief note expressing pleasure at the prospect of seeing the sketch of Leo XIII in 'Modern Men.'

(All of these letters are from the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XXV
AUTOGRAPH LETTER
SIGNED
FROM COVENTRY PATMORE

*A very significant letter from Lymington, Hastings, to
Thompson at Creccas Cottage, Pantasaph, September 10,
1895.*

It contains the following interesting remark concerning Thompson's poem, "The New Eve," which had been sent to Patmore for his criticism:

I have read it several times, and find it quite intelligible enough for song which is also prophecy.

Then, comparing himself and Thompson, Patmore continued:

We are upon very much the same lines, but you, I think, are more advanced than I am. "Dieu et ma Dame," is the legend of both of us, but at present *ma Dame* is too much for the balance, peace, and purity of my religion. There is too much of heart-ache in it.

Written very near the end, this letter reveals the deep desolation of soul of Patmore's last days, and suggests its source.

(Gift of Mr. Wilfrid Meynell.)

XXVI

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE'S
READER'S REPORT

The original Manuscript of Le Gallienne's report to John Lane, recommending the publication of Thompson's POEMS.

This document that decided the publisher to print *Poems*, Thompson's first volume, was sent to Lane after Le Gallienne had read the first sheaf of Thompson's poems submitted to Lane by the Meynells. It reads:

Lyrical Poems of Francis Thompson

Would certainly publish. Rich, coloured, oriental things. Remind me very much of Crashaw. Lack concentration & form, but are marked by a fine, extremely Latinized style, a sumptuous fancy, & some splendid lines. One or two strike me as less good, such as "The Dead at Westminster"—& a rigid revision might be well, though the writer seems to have revised them a good deal already. Probably they will be more characteristic as they are. To prune them too much would be to rob them of their charm of prodigality.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XXVII

THE CHILD SET IN THE MIDST

*A presentation copy from Wilfrid Meynell to J. C. Squire,
inscribed:* The first anthology to contain a Francis Thompson.
J. C. Squire from his friend Wilfrid Meynell.
Greatham March 1924.

First Edition. London, 1892. Original boards. The first book to contain Thompson's writings. The editor, Mr. Wilfrid Meynell, included four of his young protégé's poems: "Daisy," "The Poppy," "A Song of Youth and Age," and "To My Godchild."

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XXVIII

POEMS

[A]

A presentation copy. The front flyleaf bears the inscription:

ARTHUR HUTCHINSON
FROM
FRANCIS THOMPSON
1893

First Edition. London, 1893. Original boards. Hutchinson, a close friend of the Meynells, was editor of the *Windsor Magazine*, during the Nineties.

[B]

First Edition. London, 1893. Original white vellum. Twelve copies only, of this first edition of *Poems*, were bound in full vellum. These copies were numbered and signed by the publisher. This is number 8.

[C]

First Edition. London, 1893. Original boards. A copy of the ordinary first edition limited to 500 copies. With this volume is a special trial binding rejected by the publisher, John Lane, in favor of the cover actually used. The decorated circles on the trial binding are stamped in black and gold. On the cover finally chosen the circles are outlined in gold alone.

[D]

First Edition. London, 1893. Original boards. A copy from the library of Hugh Walpole, bearing his bookplate.

(All of these are from the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XXIX

SONGS WING-TO-WING: AN OFFERING TO TWO SISTERS

[A]

A unique advance copy of the very rare privately printed issue sent by Mr. Wilfrid Meynell to John Lane who later published the volume as SISTER SONGS.

First Edition. London, 1895. Original wrappers. The sheets of this copy as they came off the press were hurriedly bound in unlettered blue wrappers and forwarded to Lane. This was the first copy off the press. All other copies are bound in white printed wrappers.

[B]

A later copy of the same issue as the above, bound in white printed wrappers.

First Edition. London, 1895. Original wrappers. Because of its rigidly limited production this has become one of the rarest of modern first editions.

[C]

SISTER SONGS: AN OFFERING TO TWO SISTERS

The presentation copy from Thompson to Patmore. Patmore's bookplate is inside the front cover.

First Edition. London, 1895. Original cloth. When *Poems* appeared, Thompson had not yet met Patmore. When *New Poems* was published, Patmore was dead, and its verse Dedication to

[47]

Patmore is, in substance, the same as the famous inscription on the front flyleaf of this volume:

To Coventry Patmore

This book has nothing worthy of the receiver, nor altogether of the sender; and except you regard it for the poet's sake, you cannot truly for the poem's: since what pleases me but ill, may not well please you. Yet seeing its many pages, nothing in them memorable, and minded that at least one should be inscribed with something great; and that where all else is mortal and for oblivion, this should have somewhat diurnal and imperishing: therefore I set here your Name.

F. T.

July 10th, 1895

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XXX
NEW POEMS

First Edition. London, 1897. This last volume of Thompson's poetry appeared after the death of Patmore to whom it is dedicated. The Dedication, in verse, is very similar to the inscription in Thompson's presentation copy of "Sister Songs," sent to Patmore —one of the most precious items of the Seymour Adelman Collection.

XXXI

THE WORKS OF FRANCIS THOMPSON

[A]

First Edition. London, 1913. Three volumes. Original cloth. An original manuscript of Thompson, formerly inserted, has been removed and placed among the Manuscripts of this collection. (Cf. I-A.) This Manuscript was given to John Drinkwater by Mr. Wilfrid Meynell who has written a note to that effect in the book. The volumes contain the bookplate and signature of John Drinkwater.

(Gift of Mrs. Edward C. Donnelly.)

[B]

The same. Original dust-wrappers.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

[50]

XXXII

COLLECTED POETRY

[A]

First Edition. London, 1913. Original wrappers. With few exceptions, the poems are here printed in the order of their original publication.

[B]

The same. *Edition de luxe*. Large paper copy, issued in limp vellum. 500 copies were printed.

(Gift of Mrs. Edward C. Donnelly.)

[C]

Modern Library Edition of Thompson's Poems. New York. No date. A presentation copy to Father Leonard Feeney, S.J., from Everard Meynell, then a patient in a hospital for tubercular patients, in Buffalo, New York, conducted by a relative of Meynell's American wife. The allusion in the inscription Father Feeney has thus kindly explained: "Shortly before meeting Meynell he had read a poem of mine in *America* called 'The Welcome,' a little Christmas verse which he was kind enough to have remembered. . . . Now there were no genuflecting lambs in the poem, but I had made reference to the fact that the ox and the ass at the manger 'could not kneel and adore for the poor creatures never were angels before.' His remembrance of the lines was as of 'Those genuflecting lambs.' "

(Gift of Reverend Leonard Feeney, S.J.)

XXXIII
SELECTED POEMS

[A]

London, 1911. Edited with a biographical note by Wilfrid Meynell. Presentation copy from Wilfrid Meynell to John Drinkwater.

(Gift of Mrs. Edward C. Donnelly.)

[B]

First printing of Revised Edition. London, 1934. Original wrappers. Inscribed by Wilfrid Meynell. Inserted on the inside of the cover is a fragment of a letter from Thompson to Mr. Meynell. It reads:

Since I don't know what day it is, I am not superfluous enough to try dating my note.

(Gift of Reverend Louis J. Gallagher, S.J.)

XXXIV

[A]

ODE TO ENGLISH MARTYRS. London, 1906. This is a reprint, but the first separate edition. The poem first appeared in the *Dublin Review*, April 1906.

(Gift of Mr. John T. Hughes.)

[B]

A DEAD ASTRONOMER. An early separate printing of the poem inspired by the death of the famous Jesuit astronomer Father Stephen Joseph Perry, friend of the Meynells and Francis Thompson. Father Perry died at sea, December 27, 1889, while conducting an eclipse expedition. This card is a reprint from *Merry England*, April, 1890.

(Gift of Mr. John T. Hughes.)

XXXV

[A]

WHO GOES THERE? by Wilfrid Meynell. On page 93 Thompson's poem, "This is My Beloved" is published for the first time. On page 25, a note of autobiographical interest attaching to the lines reads: "My poet, when his mother died, felt that he could not endure the shame of her seeing, from her Paradisal place, the real him—and he who had this dread himself a saint of a sort! This dead mother's Second Sight into the soul of her beloved son, he calls 'the Second Death'; and half doubts St. John when he says that over the Redeemed the Second Death has no power."

(Gift of Mrs. Edward C. Donnelly.)

[B]

THE DOME. This is Number Five, published on May Day, 1898. It includes "Tom o' Bedlam's Song," one of Thompson's poems not included in his Collected Works. In a letter to Arthur Doubleday — one of the items of the Seymour Adelman Collection — Thompson mentions this poem in speaking of a fourth volume of poems which, however, was never published. Beneath the title is the following:

(Written round selected verses—the third and fourth stanzas and the first five lines of the first stanza in the following poem—from the well-known song in "Wit and Drollery.")

With the volume is a letter of presentation from Mr. Shane Leslie to Father Connolly.

(Gift of Mr. Shane Leslie.)

[C]

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA by Father Leopold de Chérancé, O.S.F.C., rendered into English by Father Marianus, O.S.C.F., with an Intro-

duction by Father Anselm, O.S.F.C. First Edition. London, 1895. A poem by Thompson, "To St. Anthony of Padua" is here published for the first time. Father Anselm Kenealy who wrote the Introduction was Thompson's closest friend and adviser during his years at Pantasaph. Later he became Archbishop of Simla. Recently he retired from his See and returned to London.

[D]

EYES OF YOUTH, a book of verse with a Foreword by G. K. Chesterton. First Edition. London, 1910. This volume contains poems by Viola Meynell, Olivia Meynell, Monica (Meynell) Saleeby, and others. Four early poems of Thompson are here published for the first time in book form: "Threatened Tears," "An Arab Love Song," "Buona Notte," and "The Passion of Mary."

[55]

XXXVI

UNCOLLECTED VERSES

Twenty-five copies of this collection were privately printed by Clement Shorter for distribution among his friends, London, July 1917. Every copy is numbered and signed by the editor. This is number 7.

[A]

None of the poems and fragments, excepting the last, had previously appeared in book-form. In a foreword the editor acknowledges his obligation to Everard Meynell in whose article, "The Notebooks of Francis Thompson," in the *Dublin Review*, January, 1917, the poems were printed for the first time. The titles are: FRAGMENT OF AN ODE TO COVENTRY PATMORE; IN A MORTAL GARDEN THEY SET THE POET; RAN A RILLET, CHILL AT BOSOM; TO ST. JOHN THE DIVINE; WRITTEN AT THE TIME OF THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR; THE TIME IS NOW; TILL ALL MY LIFE LAY ROUND ME; LULLABY; CRICKET VERSES; THIS IS MY BELOVED.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

[B]

The same. Original wrappers. Presentation copy from Clement Shorter to John Drinkwater, bearing Drinkwater's bookplate.

(Gift of Mrs. Edward C. Donnelly.)

[56]

XXXVII

SHELLEY

[A]

George Meredith's copy of the large paper edition. It contains the bookplate of his son, William Maxse Meredith, to whom it was bequeathed.

First Edition. London, 1909. Original vellum. Inserted are two important association letters.

One is an autograph letter, signed, from Mr. Wilfrid Meynell to George Meredith presenting the above volume. Written with Mr. Meynell's unfailing charm and simplicity, it begins:

My dear Mr. Meredith,

Do not sigh, for here is a book which asks for no acknowledgment at your hands, though I ask for a little liking.

The other letter, from George Meredith to Alfred Austin, Poet Laureate of England, was sent from Box Hill, August 17, 1908. Wilfrid Ward, editor of the *Dublin Review*, had sent Meredith a copy of the July issue, containing the Shelley essay. In this four-page letter we have Meredith's criticism of Thompson's prose masterpiece, as well as some interesting remarks about Shelley. It reads in part:

It is Francis Thompson, as in his verse, heaping sentences, but they do not obscure his hold of the real matter. He certainly pierces to Shelley the poet. Shelley the man was like him, but too often the bee caught in a flowercup. Nor can I think he would have altered in full maturity.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

[B]

First Edition. London, 1909. Original cloth. Small paper copy.

[57]

[c]

Mosher Edition. Portland, Maine, 1912. Edited by Thomas B. Mosher, who writes the Preface. It contains a reprint of the poem by Charles Hanson Towne, "The Quiet Singer," with the sub-title, (*Ave! Francis Thompson*).

[58]

XXXVIII

[A]

A RENEGADE POET AND OTHER ESSAYS, with an Introduction by Edward J. O'Brien. First Edition. Boston, 1910. An autograph copy inscribed: "To my friend, J. A. Morgan, S.J., from Edward J. O'Brien, in sincere gratitude and affection. March, 1913." Included are the following criticisms not found in the volume of Thompson's prose edited by Mr. Wilfrid Meynell: "Stray Thoughts on Shelley," "Aubrey de Vere," "William Ernest Henley," "The Error of the Extreme Realists," "Bunyan in the Light of Modern Criticism," and "Sartor Re-read."

[B]

ESSAYS OF TODAY AND YESTERDAY: Francis Thompson, with an Introduction by Wilfrid Meynell. First Edition. London, 1927. It includes the following studies not found in the third volume of Thompson's works edited by Mr. Meynell: "Robert Browning," "William Ernest Henley," "Henley's Byron and Burns," and "A Prince of India on the Prince of Games."

[C]

HEALTH AND HOLINESS: A Study of the Relations between Brother Ass, the Body, and his Rider, the Soul. Preface by George Tyrrell. First Edition of separate printing. London, 1905. Original boards.

(Gift of Mrs. Edward C. Donnelly.)

[D]

SIR LESLIE STEPHEN AS A BIOGRAPHER. Original wrappers. Of this edition twenty copies were privately printed and numbered by Clement Shorter.

(Gift of Mrs. Edward C. Donnelly.)

[E]

SAINT IGNATIUS LOYOLA. Edited by John Hungerford Pollen, S.J. Preface by Mr. Wilfrid Meynell. London, 1909.

XXXIX

FRANCIS THOMPSON

BY

WILFRID SCAWEN BLUNT

[A]

*Presentation copy from Blunt to
Mr. Shane Leslie, June 18, 1920.*

First Edition. London, 1907. Original wrappers. This is a reprint from the *Academy*, November 23, 1907. There is a note of presentation from Mr. Shane Leslie.

[B]

A copy of the same.

(Gift of Mr. John T. Hughes.)

[C]

*Presentation copy from Wilfrid
Meynell to John Drinkwater.*

(Gift of Mrs. Edward C. Donnelly.)

XL

THE LIFE OF FRANCIS THOMPSON

[A]

*A presentation copy from Mr. Wilfrid
Meynell to his nephew, Patrick Butler.*

First Edition. London, 1913. Original cloth. Everard Meynell's definitive Life of the poet. There is an amusing textual correction by Mr. Wilfrid Meynell. On page eighty-seven we read:

"Thompson's manuscripts, most uninviting in outward aspect, were pigeon-holed, unread by a much-occupied editor for six months."

Mr. Wilfrid Meynell crossed out *months* and wrote in the margin, in pencil: "*weeks* my son! W.M."

[B]

First Edition. London, 1913. Original cloth. Another copy.

(Both copies are from the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

XLI

THE HOUND OF HEAVEN

[A]

First Edition of the first separate printing. London, 1908.
(Gift of Mrs. T. Morris Murray.)

[B]

The Same.
(Gift of Mr. John T. Hughes.)

[C]

First Illustrated Edition. London, 1914. Ten Drawings for the Poem, by Frideswith Huddart.

(Gift of Mrs. T. Morris Murray.)

[D]

FRANCIS THOMPSON'S HOUND OF HEAVEN: A STUDY. By Rev. J. F. X. O'Conor, S.J. First Edition. Privately Printed. No date.

[E]

A copy of the same. New York, 1912.

[F]

THE HOUND OF HEAVEN: AN INTERPRETATION. By Rev. Francis P. LeBuffe, S.J. New York, 1921. A presentation copy from Father LeBuffe.

[G]

New York, 1922. An edition with an Introduction by James J. Daly, S.J., and a Foreword by Mr. Wilfrid Meynell. A Presentation copy from Father Daly.

[H]

AN INTERPRETATION OF FRANCIS THOMPSON'S HOUND OF HEAVEN. By Sister Mary de Lourdes Macklin, M.A., Sisters of Charity of Nazareth. Preface by Brother Leo.

[I]

'THIS TREMENDOUS LOVER': AN EXPOSITION OF FRANCIS THOMPSON'S 'HOUND OF HEAVEN.' By R. Moffat Gautrey. London, 1932.

[J]

THE HOUND OF HEAVEN: Text of the dramatized, choral version presented by twelve thousand members of The Grail, Albert Hall, London, May, 1936.

[K]

THE HOUND OF HEAVEN: A MUSIC DRAMA FOR SOLI AND CHORUS OF MIXED VOICES WITH ORCHESTRAL ACCOMPANIMENT. By Humphrey J. Stewart. New York, 1924. The first performances were given under the direction of the Dominican Fathers of San Francisco, in the Civic Auditorium, April, 1924.

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XLII

EX ORE INFANTIUM

[A]

LITTLE JESUS. London, 1920. Written and illuminated by Edith Bertha Crapper.

(Gift of James H. Connolly, Jr.)

[B]

EX ORE INFANTIUM. With Irish translation by Liam O'Meehan. 1937.

(Gift of Miss Marguerite Ryan.)

[C]

A picture of the Christmas Crib in the Monastery Church at Pantasaph, 1895, which inspired "Ex Ore Infantium." This is a copy of the snapshot found among Thompson's papers after his death. A presentation letter from the poet's sister accompanies the picture.

(Gift of Sister Mary Austin, the poet's sister.)

XLIII
TRANSLATIONS OF THOMPSON'S
POEMS INTO FRENCH

[A]

CORYMBE DE L'AUTOMNE. *Traduction par Paul Claudel.* In LA CANTANTE À TROIS VOIX SUIVIE DE SOUS LE REMPART D'ATHÈNES ET DE TRADUCTIONS DIVERSES. Paris. No date.

(Gift of Mrs. Edward C. Donnelly.)

[B]

CORYMBE DE L'AUTOMNE, *traduit de l'Anglais par Paul Claudel et orné de douze gravures sur bois par André Lhote.* Paris, 1920.

(Gift of Mrs. Edward C. Donnelly.)

[C]

UNE ANTIENNE DE LA TERRE, *traduit de l'Anglais par Auguste Morel. Et précédé d'une notice biographique sur Francis Thompson par Wilfrid Meynell.* Paris, 1920.

(Gift of Mrs. Edward C. Donnelly.)

[D]

FRANCIS THOMPSON EN FRANÇAIS RYTHMÉ. *Traduction de la comtesse C. F. Montbenoit.* Privately printed. No date. The poems translated are: "Ad Amicam," "The Grace of the Way," "The Mistress of Vision" (selected passages), "The Hound of Heaven," "Any Saint," "The Lily of the King," and "What the Poet Says of His Song."

(Gift of Rev. Francis P. LeBuffe, S.J.)

XLIV

AUTOGRAPH LETTERS

SIGNED

FROM MR. WILFRID MEYNELL

AND

SISTER MARY AUSTIN

These letters addressed to Father Connolly, refer chiefly to his annotated edition of Thompson's poems (Appleton-Century Co., New York, 1932); to the exhibition of Thompsoniana held at Boston College in 1934; and to preparations for the exhibition commemorative of the thirtieth anniversary of Thompson's death, November 13, 1937.

Sister Mary Austin never fails to express her consolation in the realization of how great is the influence of her brother's work in the spiritual as well as the literary revival of today.

The following excerpt from one of Mr. Meynell's letters will delight all who are interested in Thompson and his influence in the contemporary Catholic Revival.

. . . Lovers of Francis Thompson—what brothers we all are! . . . Here in England *The Hound of Heaven* has had a great deal to do with the Christian revival that has marked the last few months. Especially are the young non-conformists (other than Catholics) affected by it. And the advance towards the Church made by the "Anglo-Catholics," who now accept nearly all our doctrines and practices, is due, in many cases, to the influence of F. T. on their spiritual lives. I think that the lovely summer has been also a great help. Christ, the *Light of the World*, has seemed nearer when His symbol became more evident than ever before, even in the memory of an ancient like myself. . . .

XLV

AUTOGRAPHS OF
FIVE MEN OF LETTERS
WHO INFLUENCED THOMPSON
AND
ONE WHO DID NOT

[A]

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY. Autograph Letter Signed. Bishopgate Heath (London), October 12, 1815. To R. Hayward, Solicitor, Tookes Court, Chancery Lane, London. Shelley wrote this letter at the urging of William Godwin, whose daughter had eloped with Shelley a year earlier. The elopement had aroused Godwin to a fever pitch of indignation, although he forgot his indignation long enough to induce Shelley to lend him sums of money. In this letter we see the harassed poet (aged 23) requesting Hayward to raise a loan at "so low a rate as 8 or 9 per cent"; and the letter closes with the warning postscript, "It is superfluous to request that this communication should be *secret*." The letter bears contemporary post-marks on its address-leaf. At this time, in October, 1815, Shelley was hard at work completing his first major poetical effort, *Alastor*.

[B]

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE. Two pages from the original autograph manuscript of his book, *Aids to Reflection* (London, 1825). On one page Coleridge has quoted an entire sonnet from *The Temple*, by George Herbert. Everard Meynell tells us that Francis Thompson first became acquainted with George Herbert through Coleridge's enthusiasm for the seventeenth-century poet. And here, in Coleridge's own hand, is one of the sonnets—*Graces Vouchsafed in a Christian Land*—which so strongly caught Thompson's interest.

[67]

[C]

SIR WALTER SCOTT. Autograph Letter Signed. Abbotsford, September 3, 1819. Thompson's boyhood enthusiasm for Scott's ballads reached a splendid culmination, years later, in his *Ecclesiastical Ballads*. Scott sent this lengthy letter to John Ballantyne, a partner in the ill-fated publishing-house whose debts Scott was to pay off so heroically. Very moving and prophetic are his words in this letter: "I wish it to be understood that I always like to fulfill my bargains. . . ." He was completing *Ivanhoe* at the time the letter was written.

[D]

THOMAS DE QUINCEY. Autograph Letter Signed. July 3 (1854). 42 Lothian Street, Edinburgh. ". . . I am suddenly thrown into despair . . . all my books, papers, etc. are in the custody of my landlady . . . she demands some advance on giving them up. . . ."

Autograph Letter Signed. February 26, 1836. To J. J. Smith. It explains at length De Quincey's views on a business venture proposed by his correspondent.

[E]

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI. Autograph Letter Signed to Charles Howell. London, July 17, 1874. It was this intimate friend, Howell, who superintended that macabre episode—the exhumation of the body of Rossetti's wife, to obtain for publication the poems Rossetti had placed in her coffin.

Autograph Letter Signed to H. Buxton Forman, editor of Shelley's works. London, February 24, 1871. A letter, devoted entirely to Forman's review of Rossetti's newly-published *Poems*. ". . . I cannot help thanking you for the pleasure which your article in Tinsley's Magazine has given me. Of the justice of so brimming a measure of praise I of course am not the fit judge; but of its expository side I can say this much:—that no other review I have seen, written by anyone who had not watched in old intimacy the growth of my work, has at all like yours seized in each instance precisely the thread of my own conception. And you have done

[68]

this clearly and simply; without constantly raising comparisons between this and other work, and without thinking it necessary to deprecate one part of the book and so balance the praise given to another. . . .”

[F]

MATTHEW ARNOLD. Autograph Letter Signed. February 21, 1888. Pains Hill Cottage, Cobham, Surrey. That Arnold is ONE WHO DID NOT influence Thompson, is clear from a casual examination of their respective writings. Moreover, Thompson has written: “ ‘Tis not merely that I have studied no poet less; it is that I should have thought we were in the sharpest contrast. His characteristic fineness lies in that very form and restraint to which I so seldom attain: his characteristic drawback in the lack of that full stream which I am seldom without.” Nevertheless, Thompson would have warmed to the last sentence in this letter, in which Arnold complains of the unjust neglect of Coleridge.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

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XLVI

COVENTRY PATMORE

One of the greatest spiritual and literary influences in Thompson's life, as well as one of his dearest friends was Coventry Patmore.

The inclusion of the following list of Patmore items needs no apology in the light of the close relationship between the two poets. It is hoped that the future may see at Boston College a Patmore Collection that will equal the Thompson Collection in completeness and significance, and warrant the publication of a separate catalog.

LETTERS

[A]

AUTOGRAPH LETTER SIGNED TO WILLIAM ALLINGHAM. British Museum. October 30, 1852. Containing some interesting remarks about Mrs. Browning's poetry.

[B]

AUTOGRAPH LETTER SIGNED TO WILLIAM ALLINGHAM. British Museum. November 6, 1854. It concerns Allingham's proposed review of *The Betrothal* and gives the reaction of some famous contemporaries as well as his own, to reviews that had appeared in the *Leader* and the *Spectator*.

[C]

AUTOGRAPH LETTER SIGNED TO WILLIAM ALLINGHAM. British Museum. October 22, 1861. This is Patmore's request for permission to include in his anthology, *The Children's Garland*, two of Allingham's poems: "The Fairies" and "Robin Redbreast." It includes a pathetic allusion to his first wife's illness.

[70]

[D]

AUTOGRAPH LETTER SIGNED TO AN UNNAMED CORRESPONDENT. British Museum. February 3, 1863. The black border of the stationery is a reminder of the greatest grief and loss of Patmore's life—his first wife's death. Written about the time of the publication of Book II of *Victories of Love*, it contains some invaluable hints for the interpretation of *The Angel in the House*.

[E]

AUTOGRAPH LETTER SIGNED TO AN UNNAMED CORRESPONDENT. British Museum, July 30, 1862. Written a few weeks after his first wife's death, there is here no suggestion of the writer's grief, except the black border of the page. This is a business letter relative to reprinting *Faithful Forever* and *Victories of Love*.

[F]

AUTOGRAPH LETTER SIGNED TO MESSRS. BROMPTON AND LAKE. Boxted, January 18, [1866]. A business letter to a London agent, discontinuing the delivery of newspapers and journals.

[G]

AUTOGRAPH LETTER SIGNED, FROM PETER GEORGE PATMORE, THE POET'S FATHER, TO SIR JOHN PHILLIMORE. Blackheath. Sunday. (No date). A long letter expressing bewilderment at a letter from Sir John. It would seem to refer to an attempt at reconciliation in the very unpleasant litigation between Patmore's father and Colburn the publisher who had engaged Patmore to do certain literary work.

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

[71]

XLVII

POEMS OF COVENTRY PATMORE

[A]

POEMS. First Edition. London, 1844. Presentation copy from Patmore to his brother Eugene.

[B]

TAMERTON CHURCH-TOWER AND OTHER POEMS. First Edition. London, 1853.

[C]

THE BETROTHAL, First Part of the ANGEL IN THE HOUSE. First Edition. London, 1854.

[D]

THE ESPOUSALS, Second Part of the ANGEL IN THE HOUSE. First Edition. London, 1856.

[E]

FAITHFUL FOREVER, Third Part of the ANGEL IN THE HOUSE. First Edition. London, 1860.

[F]

VICTORIES OF LOVE, Fourth Part of the ANGEL IN THE HOUSE. First Edition. London, 1863. Presentation copy to Jane Lampson, containing autograph letter, signed, from Patmore.

[G]

THE ANGEL IN THE HOUSE. First Edition of complete poem in one volume. London, 1866. Presentation copy from Patmore to John Ruskin, January 1, 1866. Ruskin's annotations are found in the margins.

[h]

AMELIA. London, 1878. Presentation copy from Patmore to Edmund Gosse, January 26, 1890. It bears Gosse's bookplate. One of twenty copies privately printed on paper. Two illuminated pages are on vellum.

[i]

THE ANGEL IN THE HOUSE. Manuscript of an edition prepared by Mr. Shane Leslie, who writes in the introduction: "The first, original and unique draft of Coventry Patmore's Angel in the House is in the Greatham Library near Amberley in Sussex, where it was left by Alice Meynell, to whom the poet made it a present. It differs considerably from the printed versions and for that difference is of intense interest to Patmoreans. It is here reproduced unchanged. It is unique for the poet describes it in his own script as 'the only existing autograph MS.' On the other hand the poet presented Sir Edmund Gosse with a MS of the Angel 'as altered and rearranged for the second edition.' This was MS in so far as the MS entries exceeded the print in bulk. This edition became the version which has descended the ages." Parts of the remainder of this introduction by the foremost living authority on Patmore will be found in his brilliant volume, *Studies in Sublime Failure*.

[j]

ODES. Privately printed, London, 1868. Presentation copy from Patmore to Dante Gabriel Rossetti. It bears Patmore's inscription: "Coventry Patmore To Dante Gabriel Rossetti, With affectionate remembrances of P[re] R[aphaelite] P[ainting] days. May, 1870."

(From the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

[k]

THE UNKNOWN EROS AND OTHER ODES. ODES I-XXXI. London, 1877.

[l]

THE UNKNOWN EROS. London, 1878. Presentation copy from Patmore to Robert Browning, October 13, 1884. First Edition of the present arrangement of the Odes.

[73]

XLVIII

PROSE OF COVENTRY PATMORE

[A]

PRINCIPLE IN ART. First Edition. London, 1889.

[B]

RELIGIO POETAE. First Edition. London, 1893.

[C]

THE ROD, THE ROOT AND THE FLOWER. First Edition. London, 1895. Thompson's high praise of this volume is expressed in one of the letters of the Seymour Adelman Collection.

[D]

SAINT BERNARD ON THE LOVE OF GOD. Translated by Marianne Caroline and Coventry Patmore. First Edition, 1881. (The selections here translated have been identified in the Latin text and newly translated by Father Connolly in a volume recently published by the Spiritual Book Associates, New York City.)

[E]

HOW I MANAGED AND IMPROVED MY ESTATE. London, 1886. A volume that reveals a great poet as a very practical man.

XLIX

ERNEST DOWSON

Besides the rather accidental connection with Thompson consequent upon his review of Dowson's poetry, the Manuscript of which is in the Seymour Adelman Collection, a more intimate relationship is remarked by Everard Meynell in his Life of the poet. "Thompson watched with much interest his words creep into currency. *Roseal*—'most beloved of my revivals'—which he had known only in Lodge's *Glaucus and Scylla*, he saw reappear in Dowson and other writers, and realised it was probably from Thompson and not from Lodge that it had been learnt. In this he saw the sign—the only one, he said—of his influence."

[A]

VERSES. First Edition. London, 1896. Original vellum. Cover-design by Aubrey Beardsley. 330 copies were printed. Presentation copy inscribed by the author on the fly-leaf to Pierre Loüys, July, 1896.

[B]

AUTOGRAPH LETTER SIGNED, TO PIERRE LOÜYS. Pont-Aven (Brittany), July, 1896. An announcement of the publication of *Verses* and a promise to send a copy to Loüys.

[C]

AUTOGRAPH LETTER SIGNED, TO PIERRE LOÜYS. London, November, 1896. An apology for delay in sending the promised copy of *Verses*. The volume had been lying on his table for months, wrote Dowson, inscribed and wrapped and ready to be mailed.

[D]

DECORATIONS. First Edition. London, 1899. Original vellum. Original tissue dust-wrapper. All the poems published by Dowson during his lifetime are included in *Verses* and *Decorations*.

[75]

[E]

THE STORY OF BEAUTY AND THE BEAST. First Edition. London, 1908. Original cloth, in original orange dust-wrapper. This charming translation in this edition was limited to 300 copies.

[F]

ORIGINAL AUTOGRAPH MANUSCRIPT OF DOWSON'S SHORT STORY, "THE DYING OF FRANCIS DONNE." Sixteen closely-written quarto pages in Dowson's handwriting, signed. This story appeared in Aubrey Beardsley's magazine, *The Savoy*, August, 1896. In his Introduction to the collected edition of Dowson, 1905, Arthur Symons speaks of this as Dowson's prose masterpiece.

[G]

ERNEST DOWSON. By Victor Plarr. First Edition. London, 1914. Original. In this volume many of Dowson's letters were published for the first time.

(All of these Dowson items are from the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

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L
A MISCELLANY

The following items from the Seymour Adelman Collection, are in various ways related to Thompson.

[A]

The Romantic Nineties, by RICHARD LE GALLIENNE. First Edition. London, 1926. Original cloth. Here the reader who first recommended Thompson's poems for publication gives us some delightful reminiscences of the poet and his closest friends, the Meynells, and Coventry Patmore.

[B]

Caricatures of Twenty-Five Gentlemen, by MAX BEERBOHM. First Edition. London, 1896. Original tissue dust-wrapper. It was this book that heralded the arrival of England's great literary caricaturist.

THE WORKS OF MAX BEERBOHM. First Edition. London, 1896. Original cloth. One of the wittiest books of essays in the 90's.

Rossetti and His Circle, by MAX BEERBOHM. First Edition. London, 1922. Original cloth. The first publication of the celebrated caricatures of Rossetti, Patmore and Meredith.

[C]

The Art of Thomas Hardy, by LIONEL JOHNSON. First Edition. London, 1894. Original cloth. This critique of Hardy, whose novels Thompson reviewed for the *Academy*, is a classic. Johnson was not so happy in his criticism of Thompson's style when he spoke of it as a more harmful influence than the worst of American newspapers!

Poems by LIONEL JOHNSON. First Edition. London, 1895. Original boards.

Reviews and Critical Papers, by LIONEL JOHNSON. First Edition. London, 1921. Original cloth with dust-wrappers.

[D]

Rape of the Lock by ALEXANDER POPE. First Edition with illustrations by AUBREY BEARDSLEY. London, 1896. Original cloth.

Original Drawing, "Ornament for Pierrot's Library." This drawing came from the collection of Thompson's publisher, John Lane, for whom it was originally made. It is fully recorded in *The Later Work of Aubrey Beardsley* where it is given a full-page reproduction.

Autograph Receipt Signed, for his Drawing to Illustrate Edgar Allan Poe's *Tales*. It is also signed with Beardsley's 'Japanese' monogram.

[E]

The Beardsley Period, by OSBERT BURDETT. First Edition. London, 1925. Original cloth. An interesting 'Essay in Perspective' of the 90's, with numerous allusions to Thompson, Patmore, the Meynells, Le Gallienne and others.

[F]

Autograph Letter Signed, BLISS CARMAN to F. H. Day, requesting a review-copy of Thompson's "Odes and other Poems" — *New Poems*.

[G]

Dr. Johnson's "Lives of the Poets" SWINBURNE's copy. The flyleaf bears one of his earliest known autographs—April 18th, 1850, a few days after his thirteenth birthday. Swinburne was then a student at Eton. In his biography of Swinburne (p. 16) Edmund Gosse speaks of this volume. Thompson did not share Mrs. Meynell's great aversion for Swinburne. As Everard Meynell writes in his Life of the poet: "Thompson's admirations were always well set up and bright-eyed because they were so well reasoned. No prepossessions, whims, or sloths made up his opinion. No author was carelessly shelved or unshelved; he did not put Swinburne aside although his Angels and Swinburne's never rested nor flew on the wing together."

(All of the items of this Miscellany are from the Seymour Adelman Collection.)

APPENDIX

1

ECCLESIASTICAL BALLADS

I

LILIUM REGIS

II

THE VETERAN OF HEAVEN

MANUSCRIPT

*The version in this unsigned Manuscript,
is the same as the published version.
There is a single verbal change, twice made.*

Besides the Ballads, written in ink on a double sheet of foolscap, there are, in pencil, first drafts of three fragments not included in Thompson's collected poems. The first of these, illegible in parts, has as its theme the sun, a favorite theme with Thompson. The second is an unfinished poem on the first Sleep and the first awakening of the first Man. The third is a fancied dialogue between a Wise Man and Ecclesiasticus, Son of Sirach.

(Loaned for the Exhibition by Mrs. Celia Tobin Clark.)

2

AN ARAB LOVE-SONG, adapted and set to music by Reverend Leonard Feeney, S.J. This is an intensely interesting bond between two poets so alike in the ideals of their poetic message—one of the past, the other of today.

(Gift of Rev. Thomas B. Feeney, S.J.)

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